

GRAPEVINE

VISITACION VALLEY

VOL 1, NO 4

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

NOVEMBER 1986



Power Outage Forces Tower Residents To Rough It

By Pat Christensen

"It was early in the afternoon and I was surprised that when I turned the garbage disposal on the usual live blue spark which signals its grinding didn't flash at me. That was the first indication I had that something was wrong...and would stay wrong for a whole week," recalls Nancy Christensen, a young single mother of two small children and long time resident of Geneva Towers Apartments. "I wasn't using any electricity in my apartment at the time, but I soon found out that the hallways were pitch black - they get no light from the outside - and there was no water to flush the toilet."

On Sunday, October 12 at 1:18 p.m. Geneva Towers, home to 2500 people, blacked out. Totally dependent on electricity for lights, cooking facilities, drinking and bathing water - even functioning toilets - residents were without these essential services for 36 hours and intermittently throughout the following week.

Refrigerators and freezers defrosted spoiling huge quantities of food; toilets were out of commission for days, drinking water and hot water for washing were mostly unavailable for a week; elevators which carry residents up and down the twenty floors of the twin

towers were either not functioning or dangerously undependable, stopping unexpectedly and trapping riders between floors. Disabled and old people were either trapped in their highrise apartments or chanced a painful and hazardous trip down the dark staircases.

One 77 year old, disabled resident fell down an entire flight of stairs when he was returning home from a friend's house where he had gone to take a bath.

Geneva Towers is owned by a limited partnership with Eugene Burger as general partner. Eugene Burger Management Corporation of Greenbrae, California manages the property. Joseph Williams, site manager, told the GRAPEVINE that the outage was caused by blown out fuses, and the only source located in the United States for these fuses was in North Carolina. It took several days to find the supply and fly the fuses to SFO. During that time, Burger Management hired Electromotion to bring in two portable generators - one for each building - to power the exit lights and water pumps.

The Towers, built in 1966 by Eichler, a well-known builder of suburban homes, were originally intended

Continued to Page 3

Valley Teen Births highest in City

Teenage Pregnancy Epidemic

By Nancy Kerns

Teenage pregnancy has reached epidemic proportions and Visitation Valley has the highest teen birth rate of any neighborhood in San Francisco.

More than 55,000 California teenagers gave birth in 1981. Medi-Cal funds approximately one out of three births to teens, costing the state more than \$105,000,000 annually.

This includes the costs of delivering the teen pregnancies, neonatal intensive care (11% of teenagers first pregnancies are low birth weight infants, and the lower the birth weight, the higher the cost of providing care for that infant) and rehospitalization. Also, approximately 60% of the Welfare budget goes to women who first gave birth as teens.

Teen pregnancy is costly, and it is a big problem in VisValley. Sixteen per cent of all births in the Valley were to teenagers 10-19 years old. And most of the other births were to women who probably had their first children in their teens.

There are many explanations for these serious figures, but the most commonly cited one is poverty. High levels of teenage pregnancy have been proven to be associated with extreme poverty, and the accompanying ghetto residency, low career aspirations, female-headed households, large family size and lax parental supervision of initial dating experiences.

Studies conducted by the Population Research Center at the University of Chicago indicate that girls from poverty-stricken or ghetto neighborhoods are more likely to have sexual activity at earlier ages, and less likely to behave in ways that "promote their own social and economic well-being, both by delaying the onset of sexual activity and by using a contraceptive early and regularly."

Another poverty-related reason for high teen pregnancy rates has to do with a girl's concept of her future and her aspirations. Often a young girl will see pregnancy as something to look forward to, if she perceives herself as having

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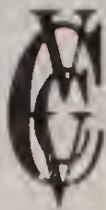
New School Program at Visitation Valley Middle School

Environmental Science is on the move at Visitation Valley Middle School. A "hands-on" outdoor science program is being implemented this year which will include flower and vegetable gardening and nature studies in McLaren Park. Sixth and seventh grade students will spend a week

at Caritas Creek, an Environmental Science Camp in Sonoma County.

The goals for this program are to introduce students to the environment around them and to develop environmental awareness and ethics.

CENTERVOICE



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

By Julie Kavanagh
Executive Director

It was a holiday, and government offices were closed except for emergency numbers. Even the Mayor's Office of Emergency Services which is supposed to be the agency to deal with problems caused by earthquakes, did not know how to get water and portable toilets!

When the lights, water and toilets went out at Geneva Towers, we thought that the most important thing the residents needed immediately was water and portable toilets. We got on the phone and tried calling around for some help.

I sure hope there is no earthquake before they figure out the answer to how to get those basic items!

The Red Cross finally came out with sandwiches and sodas, but by then the tenants had been without WATER for 28 hours, and it still took awhile for the volunteers to locate water for them.

WHAT IT MEANS, DEAR NEIGHBORS, is that we have to remember how it was before all those seductive government programs convinced us that BIG BROTHER was going to care for us. Some say, "The Lord helps those who help themselves." Believe it...nothing is truer! We all need to learn to help ourselves AND EACH OTHER.

HERE'S HOW:

1. Call the Community Center at 467-6400. Tell us if you have access to water, toilets, sleeping space, food, clothing, medicine, and whatever else you think your neighbors might need during any kind of emergency.
2. Give us your name and phone number if you can help collect these kinds of things.
3. Give us your name and phone number if you want to help us begin a Telephone Tree to set up lines of quick communication in case of an emergency.

We will help to set up this simple arrangement to allow ourselves and our neighbors to respond to each other in times of need. We must depend on ourselves. We must learn that we are family, and I am responsible for you, and you are responsible for me. It is the only way we will survive. If we don't do this, things can only get worse... but if we DO, things will get much better...and stay that way!

Ah, memories of old. Not only did I work out there when All People's Coalition got started, but I grew up in the Sunnydale Housing Project (1833 Sunnydale, JU 4-1929. I still remember it all!) Left Sunnydale in '54 to go to CAL. My mom didn't move out of the Project until, as I recall, '63.

Good luck in your efforts.

Mike Miller
Organize Training
Center
San Francisco

(Editor's Note: Many readers will remember Mike who helped Geneva Towers residents organize and was instrumental in the formation of the All People's Coalition in the 70s.)

The events at Geneva Towers have given rise to much discussion, rumor and speculation, all of which has been difficult to either prove or disprove because of the reluctance of the Towers management to speak opening and frankly with those persons who wish to assist them and their tenants with whatever problems they might be experiencing.

IF the electrical system at the Towers is so obsolete that there were not enough fuses or transformers in the entire United States to replace those which were not working, WHY is the system not replaced with one with more commonly available parts?

IF one of the elevators has been flooded with water for a long period of time because a tenant clogged the sump pump by flushing an article of clothing down the toilet, WHY doesn't management fix the damage and sue the particular tenant for the cost of the repair?

IF the management didn't need assistance with their own or the tenants' problems, WHY weren't the tenants reimbursed for the food they lost and WHY did it take so long for the electricity to be restored?

IT IS REMARKABLE that HUD and the Health Department haven't made any inspection of the troubled premises after receiving so many calls and complaints. IT IS A PUZZLE that if HUD money is subsidizing some of the tenants' rents, that HUD hasn't insisted on a management audit of the Towers.

I sure hope that, now that the electricity is on, the tenants don't forget that it can happen again. I hope that we all remember that the tenants and their friends are the only ones who can INSIST that the laws are enforced. I'm sure that as long as the ownership and the management of the Towers show good

faith efforts, everyone concerned will make every effort to support them in those efforts.

Julia A. Kavanagh
Executive Director
V. V. C. C.

A piece of VisValley history and recognition was omitted from that article, "Green Thumb Neighbors Receive National Recognition." As you should well remember, the All People's Coalition Foundation under the presidency of former supervisor Don Horanzy was responsible for arranging the financing and implementing the actual construction of these projects.

When he went on to become a San Francisco Supervisor, he was replaced by Clarence Fleming of Little Hollywood. I was the next person to succeed Clarence. By then APC was on it's last leg.

The Community Garden was working fine, but the Senior Park was still not finished. I took it upon myself to make sure that Visitation Valley would go down in history as having the first ever park for the exclusive use of seniors. Working with the Mayor's OCO and the William Hammond Hall Society, some kids from the Valley, work-furlough people and using help and material and equipment from my own plumbing company, the park was finished. The exact date of opening was unfortunately timed with a rally showing solidarity with the Polish strikers.

Supervisor Nancy Walker did the ribbon cutting honors and awarded APC a Board of Supervisors Commendation. Many people showed up for the festivities with all the food being donated by Safeway.

After my leaving APC, only then was the lease turned over to the Community Center. I have monitored the progress on the park and am very glad that people are still taking an interest in it. This is one more patch of barren land that was reclaimed by the neighbors and shows that we as Valley residents can make things work when we try.

Don Bartone
Lathrop Avenue

GRAPEVINE
VISITACION VALLEY

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PUBLISHED BY -
Visitation Valley Community Center
50 Raymond Avenue, S. F. 94134
(415) 467-6400
Julia A. Kavanagh, Executive Director

START-UP FUNDING PROVIDED BY -
The Koshland Committee
San Francisco Foundation
Nancy Pietrofesa, Director

MASTHEAD DESIGN - Erica Brown
NAME: GRAPEVINE - Pat Crocker
PRINTER - Garrett Press
copyright pending
Circulation: 5,000
Annual subscription \$6.00
Published monthly.

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FOR 12 ISSUES

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Tower Power Outage

Continued from Page 1

as "executive" housing, but it soon became apparent that the executives Eichler hoped would flock to his spacious, view highrises were not interested in living in Visitacion Valley. Geneva Towers became low income, subsidized apartments.

The United States Office of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), under Section T21D3, provides mortgage insurance for the buildings and inspects the premises once a year by appointment.

Duncan Howard, Region 9 Administrator for HUD, says, "Our number one priority is the tenants in our housing facilities. In Geneva Towers, there are 576 units and 540 are subsidized, which means that qualified residents pay 1/3 of their income for rent and HUD pays the remainder." (Geneva Towers instituted an overall rent increase June 1, 1986 based on increased utility costs, real estate taxes and general operating costs.) "HUD has sent engineers to meet with the owners, Scott Electric Company and PG&E to determine the cause of the outage," said Howard.

Several circumstances compound the problems at Geneva Towers: It requires 25 fuses to activate the two transformers which bring energy to the residents; there were no fuses locally, and when the source was found in North Carolina, they only had 21 fuses. According to Howard, since the water pumps are run by electricity, air had replaced water in the pipes, and if the pumps were turned on immediately, the old valves in the toilets would have ruptured - so before water could be resumed, new diaphragms had to be installed in every apartment. Tenants often put additional locks on their units, so if the tenant wasn't home, maintenance people couldn't get in to install the parts.

Other complications were that the water heating system has two stages designed to conserve energy. The first stage brings the water room temperature, then the second stage kicks in when there is a demand for hot water. Even when all was repaired and ready, the demand for hot water was so great that it took a very long time to provide it.

Conversations with residents and management lead this reporter to believe that these horrors are an everyday fact of life in the Towers and not the result of a single incident.

Reports coming out of Geneva Towers during this week of disaster read like a police crime report: attempted suicide, thugs roaming the halls, fires, floods and fear.

Williams claims that maintenance is next to impossible because of rampant vandalism; however, several residents claim that the middle elevator in Building A remained flooded with six feet of water for six months because a sump pump was broken and that a dead rat caught in a trap remained in the laundry room for three weeks. Rats, mice, lice and other pests seem to be a fact of life in the buildings, and elevators are frequently out-of-order.

One element which seems especially unfair is that the management of Geneva Towers is paid to provide essential services, such as electricity and water.

Many low income families who have barely enough to live on and have small children to support, lost precious food when their refrigerators heated up.

There were days when old people, disabled people and mothers with small children had to climb many flights of stairs to gain their homes. (Channel 4 reported that one delivery person hauled several 100 pound canisters of oxygen to apartments of desperately ill people.) Yet, Geneva Towers management is making no offer of restitution to their tenants for their loss and monumental inconvenience.

In addition, should this have been a major disaster, such as an earthquake, the 2500 residents of Geneva Towers would have been victims. No provisions exist for auxiliary power for lights and elevators, water or food supplies. Perhaps this recent calamity could serve as a lesson to us all, residents, management, HUD and neighbors, to prepare our households and community in case of a major catastrophe.

PLAYGROUNDS FOR KIDS



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WHY NOT VOTE FOR YOURSELF ?

ARE YOU :

- disgusted by the chummy relationship between Big business and Big Government ?
- outraged by U.S. support for oppressive dictators around the world ?
- dismayed by the erosion of personal freedom and the loss of goodwill between us and the rest of the world ?
- fearful of the increasing intrusion of government into our personal lives ?
- feeling robbed by the taxes you have to pay ? ...

Then why don't you say so ???

On November 4, make a Statement for Liberty, Peace, and Prosperity.

Samuel K. Grove, Libertarian for Congress

Send a thoughtful message

Ambassador Thanksgiving cards are a thoughtful way to remember friends and loved ones on Thursday, November 27.



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Speaking of Health

by Jacqueline W. Wasserman
RN, FNP

Is it possible to do anything to protect against cancer? The known causes of cancer account for about 50% of cancer-related deaths. They include cigarette smoking, genetic factors, viruses, air pollution, and radiation exposure.

Research has shown, however, that a specifically nutritious diet can safeguard the body against cancer. Since 50% of cancer-causes are still unknown, diet may be an important factor in prevention of this dread disease.

No diet can guarantee prevention, but studies by the American Cancer Society suggest the following guidelines:

-Eat more high fiber foods: fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

-Eat food rich in Vitamins A and C: carrots, tomatoes, spinach, greens, apricots, peaches, cantaloupe.

-Eat cruciferous vegetables: (Vegetables from the mustard family that form a cross when they grow.) cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, brussel sprouts.

-Avoid obesity and reduce intake of saturated and unsaturated fats, moderate alcohol, salt-cured, smoked and nitrite-cured foods.

Additional factors being investigated and worth thinking about are:

-Coffee and caffeine in high amounts have been implicated in bladder and pancreas cancer;

-Artificial sweeteners cause bladder cancer in rats;

-Frying and broiling meat and fish at high temperatures may be carcinogenic;

Following these guidelines is helpful in reducing the risk of cancer and promotes better health and prevents disease overall.

HAVE FUN! LEARN NEW SKILLS! Make new friends by joining the Koyuse Camp Fire Club at Visitacion Valley Elementary School. The club meets every week on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 2:30 to 5:15 p.m. Boys and girls, 3rd grade and up, are welcome. Call Anne Kaartunen at 239-1069 or 239-7396 for information.

Coalition Unites Valley

By Pat Christensen

Valley United is an umbrella community organization under the auspices of the Community Center.

Through monthly meetings organizations throughout the Valley can come together, share common concerns, publicize their events and plan actions to address Valley needs.

In August, Valley United convened residents and business people throughout the neighborhood for the San Francisco Alive clean-up day.

On May 24, service organizations and individuals participated in a parade, street fair and art festival coordinated by Valley United.

Along with the Improve-Association, Merchants Association, the Community Center and Little Hollywood Improvement Association, Valley United recently sponsored a very successful Candidates Night.

The mission of Valley United is:

"To develop a strong community organization dedicated to informing the general public about Visitacion Valley, improving our community and working together to enhance the quality of life for residents, businesspeople and visitors, and to "beef-up" our communication system."

Valley United's goals are, "to expand membership to anyone interested in Visitacion Valley, eastern Daly City, Bayshore, Brisbane including the industrial park and San Bruno Mountain;

"to publicize the area, assist the merchants in drawing new business, encourage thoughtful, environmentally sound development, and act as a catalyst for the advancement of racial and ethnic appreciation;

"to produce an art festival, street fair and parade annually."

Everyone is invited to Valley United meetings. The November meeting is TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25 at 1:00 p.m. at the Community Center, 50 Raymond Ave. There is no fee.



We need a Supervisor with expertise, integrity and a commitment to public service.

**DR. WILLIAM
GEE
FOR SUPERVISOR**

"My goals are to make health care accessible for everyone, especially the very young and the elderly, and to develop affordable housing for low and middle income San Franciscans. This city should continue to be one of the great places in the world. We have the resources. Let's use them in the right way, with the right priorities. The people of the city know what's good for it. We just have to listen to them."

**San Francisco Board of Supervisors
Vote on November 4.**

Friends of Dr. William Gee for Supervisor

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**Chicken, ribs & prizes
highlight fundraiser**

By Mary Lou Wagner

Barbecued ribs and chicken were featured at the October 18 fundraising party by Visitacion Valley Senior Transportation Escort Service. John King, Executive Director and J. C. Thompson prepared the barbecue and members of the Advisory Council brought potato salad and desserts.

The money raised from the event will be used for the Annual Free Christmas Luncheon.

Supervisor Nancy Walker was a special guest at the affair, and Mr. & Mrs. Al Chalmers won a big basket of groceries as the first prize for the raffle.

**Shopping tour schedule
for seniors**

VVSTES Holiday Shopping Tours began on October 27 and will be repeated on November 24 to Tanforan; December 8 to Serramonte, and December 22 to Tanforan.

Reservations for the tours must be made in advance, and there must be a minimum of 7 people signed up two days prior to each trip or the trips will be cancelled.

The shopping tour van will leave from 240 Leland Ave. at 10:00 a.m. and pick-ups at the shopping centers will be at 1:00 p.m.

For reservations call 239-6233.

Farms In Visitacion???

Do you want a vegetable, flower and herb farm in McLaren Park? If so, please return the coupon below.

San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners (SLUG) has a grant which would provide funds for a large community garden, but they need the backing of the neighbors to McLaren Park before they can implement the plan.

Plots of 20' x 30' or larger would be granted to people who want to grow food and flowers. By employing proper cultivation techniques gardens of this size can produce from 500 lbs. to 1,000 lbs. of food annually on each plot of ground.

SLUG will provide horticultural training to get the urban farmers started.

For information, call Keith at 695-9100.

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**Mark Scott
Manager**

WHEN THE VALLEY WAS YOUNG

By Len Appiano

In more than a half century of community service to the city as a member of the Visitacion Valley Improvement Association, Henry Schindel has seen his neighborhood go through a multitude of change.

Serving as the association's president for the last 16 years, the local realtor faithfully represents the valley at City Hall.

"We've taken everything in stride," he said of the VVIA.

"Whatever is necessary to do, we'll go ahead and do it."

Founded in 1905, the VVIA is the oldest improvement association in the city.

In a 1926 VVIA report edited by John Hanlon, it was written that "the time will undoubtedly come when the entire area of beautiful Visitacion Valley will be occupied with modern homes surrounding a business center which even now is worthy to be called such from the most critical point of view."

Sixty years later, Schindel cites the current development of Executive Park and construction of new housing as current projects important to the valley's future.

"I'm hoping one of these days I can be instrumental in getting a hospital out here," he said.

"People who live here will eventually appreciate the Valley because the southeast entrance into San Francisco is going to be a big thing one day; maybe the nicest section of the city."

Social Security
is not just
for old people.

Each month, more than 3 million children get Social Security benefits on the record of retired, disabled, or deceased workers.

Social Security...For People of All Ages.

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Garden
Activities

"GRASSES TO GRIZZLIES" is a class for gardeners and natural history fans and a booklet which describes how the Bay Area looked and which animals inhabited it before they were driven away by man.

San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners (SLUG) is presenting a two hour

class on Sunday, November 16 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Bernal Heights Community Center, 550 Cortland Ave.

Craig Dremann of the Redwood City Seed Company will present information on revegetating the Bay Area with native plants and animals.

The \$4.00 fee includes the booklet, "Grasses to Grizzly Bears" and a packet of native seeds. A field trip to Bernal Heights hill-

top is planned if the weather permits.

Call SLUG at 695-9100 for information.

Grapevine Puzzler

VISIT OUR VALLEY'S PAST...

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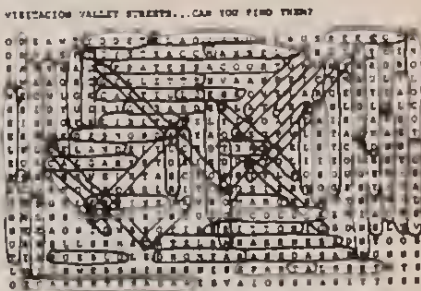
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| Costanoan (Indians) | Reis Tract (1905) |
| Explorers (1769) | Windmills (1800s) |
| Friars (1777) | Center (VVCC 1918) |
| Soldiers (1777) | School (1905) |
| Rancheros (1777-1887) | Depot (Train 1860s) |
| Cattle (1800s) | Trolley (1927) |
| Sheep (1800s) | Housing (Sunnydale 1940) |

(Words may overlap and letters may be used more than once.)

SOLUTION NEXT ISSUE

by ANNE KAARTUNEN

OCTOBER SOLUTION
Grapevine Puzzler



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CALENDAR

How Do Your Gardens Grow?

By Hyoka Bells

NOV. 5 thru 12: SPOOKTACULAR BOOK FAIR at Visitacion Valley Elementary School. Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. to 1:45 p.m. also after school Friday, Nov. 7th and Monday, Nov. 10th, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

NOV. 8: BAY CUISINE LUNCH AND BINGO PARTY - a fund-raising event for the Community Center. Everyone is cordially invited. \$4.00 includes lunch plus one Bingo card. Tickets at Community Center from Julie Kavanagh or Pat Crocker or call 467-6400. Deadline for reservations Nov. 5 - no tickets sold at door.

NOV. 15: CHRISTMAS BOUTIQUE AT ST. JAMES CHURCH, 240 Leland Ave. Baked Goods, Decorations, Gifts, White Elephants. Doors open at 10:00 a.m., Lunch @ \$3.00 per person served from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. SEE YOU THERE!

NOV. 16: "GRASSES TO GRIZZLY BEARS," a class for gardeners and natural history fans. 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. \$4.00 fee includes booklet and seed packet. Bernal Heights Community Center, 550 Cortland Ave. (See story.)

NOV. 20: PARENTS OF VISITACION VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS are invited to a tea-lunch, 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. 7th Graders will host this ethnic pot-luck luncheon and get-acquainted party.

NOV. 21: TURKEY WHIST meeting of the Visitacion Valley Improvement Assoc. 7:30 p.m. at Community Center, 50 Raymond Ave. Thanksgiving turkeys will be awarded to lucky winners

NOV. 23: St. James Church SPAGHETTI LUNCH, 12:00 N, \$2.00. At 240 Leland Ave.

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NOVEMBER

NOV. 24: HOLIDAY SHOPPING TRIPS FOR SENIORS by VVSTES to Tanforan. (See story for details.)

NOV. 27: HAPPY THANKSGIVING



DECEMBER

DEC. 7: St. James Presbyterian Church Rededication Service, 10:30 a.m.

DEC. 8: HOLIDAY SHOPPING TRIP FOR SENIORS TO SERRAMONTE.

DEC. 22: HOLIDAY SHOPPING TRIP FOR SENIORS TO TANFORAN.

REMINDER: BINGO EVERY SUNDAY AT THE COMMUNITY THE FRIENDLIEST, HIGH PAY GAME IN TOWN. Doors open 12:30, games begin at 2:00. BRING YOUR FRIENDS FOR A WINNING AFTERNOON!

TO MID-MONTH:

Plant: Beets, carrots, fava beans, garlic sets, onion sets, parsnips, radishes, salsify and wheat.

Bulbs: Anemone, crocus, daffodil, freesia and wildflowers.

Start in Flats: Lettuce, leaf and heads.

Transplant: Chard, collards, lettuce, mustard, rutabagas, spinach.

Fertilize: Bulbs, roses.

Dormant Oil Spray: In late November first spray for peach leaf curl control.

Clean-Up: Clean, sharpen and oil garden tools to be ready for next planting season.

Harvest: Before any frost basil, tomatoes, peppers.

Pest Control: Ants, aphids, slugs, snail and caterpillars.

General Care: Garden clean-up, twist off excess camellia buds for larger spring blooms.

GARDEN PLOTS ARE AVAILABLE. CALL HYOKA AT 467-6400.

Get On The Job With The SFCC

Young men and women, ages 18 to 23, who are out of school and unemployed and physically able to do hard physical work, most of it outdoors on public lands, are encouraged to inquire about the San Francisco Conservation Corps. The work includes landscape gardening, minor construction, clearing land and clean-up. One day each week is devoted to education and learning new skills. Classes include: journal writing, basic math and reading, G. E. D. prepara-

tion, English-As-Second Language, first aid, career workshops and technical training.

Corpsmembers earn \$3.35/hr. for 32 hours per week. Education days are required and unpaid.

Visitacion Valley residents will remember the Corps by the fine work they did in our community gardens and on our San Francisco Alive clean-up day.

Contact Rick Yuen, Recruitment and Placement Coordinator at 928-7322.

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Teenage Pregnancy

Continued from Page 1

no other alternatives or job opportunities. She may be aware that she will probably be able to receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children, and welfare, because of her status as an unwed teen mother.

Sometimes, too, there is the aspect of the teen just trying to fill a gap in her life, and perhaps finding someone to give her love.

"Teens tend to have a poor concept of what motherhood is really like," says Nurse Practitioner Jacqueline Wasserman, who sees mostly young, single mothers on welfare in Visitacion Valley's only medical clinic, Health America Rockridge. "They think they are going to find someone to love them, and be dependent on them, and when they find out that babies cry and require lots of time, many of them realize too late they made a mistake. Most are not ready to be parents."

Statistics show that pregnancy is the most common reason that teenage girls leave school.

According to statistics compiled by TAPP, a San Francisco organization that provides counseling and support for pregnant teens, 80% of teen mothers never finish high school, and the lower the educational attainment the higher the expected costs are to the state.

A teen graduating high school is likely to earn almost \$2,000 more a year than a teen with only 1-3 years of school. Teen mothers without a high school diploma are twice as likely to receive AFDC.

For these reasons, the local high rates of teen pregnancy are considered epidemic.

What can be done to slow the rate of teen pregnancy, and what can be done for teens who have children, and who find their lives desperate? Next month I will discuss these topics and offer some examples of teens who are trying to beat the odds and achieve high goals for themselves and their children.

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